

*AI*  
*cont.*  
filed on December 16, 1997, <sup>*now abandoned*</sup> each of which is hereby incorporated herein by reference in its entirety.

**In the claims:**

Please delete claims 1-50 and 71 without prejudice to inclusion of claims directed to the subject matter thereof in one or more other patent applications.

**REMARKS**

Claims 51-70 and 72-74 remain pending following entry of this Preliminary Amendment. Claims 1-50 and 71 have been canceled without prejudice. Claims 51, 65, 69, and 72-74 are the only independent claims.

A specification paragraph has been amended simply to update priority information. That amendment includes no new matter. For the Examiner's convenience, a "Marked-Up Copy of Amended Specification Paragraph" is enclosed, on which text added to the paragraph is underlined and text deleted from the paragraph is ~~struck through~~. A "Clean Copy of Amended Specification Paragraph" is also enclosed, showing the paragraph as it should appear following amendment.

The Applicant respectfully contends that each of claims 51-70 and 72-74 is in condition for allowance. An early and favorable office action on the merits is requested at the earliest possible time.

Respectfully submitted,

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(Date)

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